

Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)

Meal Patterns for Children

The CACFP meal patterns for children are defined by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) final rule, *Child and Adult Care Food Program: Meal Pattern Revisions Related to the Healthy, Hunger-Free Kids Act of 2010*. For detailed guidance on the meal pattern requirements and crediting foods, refer to the Connecticut State Department of Education's (CSDE) guide, *Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Child Care Programs*, and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpages.

Breakfast				
Food components ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Milk, fluid ³ Age 1: Unflavored whole milk Ages 2 and older: Unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk	4 fluid ounces (fl oz) (½ cup)	6 fl oz (¾ cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)
Vegetables, fruits, or portions of both ^{4, 5, 6}	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Grains ^{7, 8, 9, 10, 11} Whole grain-rich (WGR) or enriched bread or bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin	½ ounce equivalent (oz eq) ¹¹	½ oz eq ¹¹	1 oz eq ¹¹	1 oz eq ¹¹
WGR, enriched, or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ¹² , cereal grain ¹³ , or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
WGR, enriched, or fortified ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ¹²				
Flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup	1 cup
Puffed	¾ cup	¾ cup	1¼ cups	1¼ cups
Granola	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
◀ Refer below for important menu planning notes ▶				
Menu planning notes for breakfast ¹ Breakfast must include the minimum serving of all three components. Use the USDA's Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs (FBG) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the requirements. Commercial processed foods not listed in the FBG require a Child Nutrition (CN) label or product formulation statement (PFS) to document crediting information. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, Using Child Nutrition (CN) Labels in the CACFP , Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP , and Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP , and visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs webpage. Foods made from scratch must have a recipe that documents the crediting information per serving. For more information, visit the "Crediting Foods Made from Scratch" section of the CSDE's Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs Programs webpage. ² This age group applies only to at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters. Larger portions may be needed to meet the nutritional needs of children ages 13-18.				

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Breakfast

Menu planning notes for breakfast, *continued*

- ³ Milk must be unflavored whole milk for age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk for ages 2 and older. Flavored fat-free milk may be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving only unflavored milk. For more information, visit the "Milk Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ⁴ The vegetables component includes fresh vegetables, frozen vegetables, canned vegetables, rehydrated dried vegetables (PFS required), and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength vegetable juice. A serving of cooked vegetables must be drained. Vegetables credit based on volume (cups), except raw leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach credit as half the volume served, e.g., 1 cup of lettuce credits as ½ cup of the vegetables component. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends that CACFP menus include at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP](#), and visit the "Vegetables Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ⁵ Pasteurized full-strength juice credits as either the vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. Juice includes fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Juice in the CACFP](#) and [Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP](#). The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice.
- ⁶ The fruits component includes fresh fruit, frozen fruit, canned fruit, dried fruit, and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength fruit juice. Serve canned fruit in juice, water, or light syrup. The creditable serving of canned fruit in 100 percent juice may include the juice but cannot include water or syrup. Fruits credit based on volume (cups), except dried fruits credit as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of raisins credits as ½ cup of the fruits component. For more information, visit the "Fruits Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ⁷ Grain products and recipes must be made with creditable grains. Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ. For information on identifying creditable grains, refer to the CSDE's resources, [How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP](#), [Crediting Whole Grains in the CACFP](#), and [Crediting Enriched Grains in the CACFP](#), and visit the "Grains Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ⁸ At least one serving per day must be WGR. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. WGR foods for the CACFP contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients are enriched, bran, or germ. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP](#), and visit the "Whole Grain-rich Requirement" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ⁹ Grain-based desserts cannot credit. Examples include cookies, piecrusts in sweet pies, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. Sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers are not grain-based desserts. However, the CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week between all meals and snacks. For more information, visit the USDA's [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#) webpage.
- ¹⁰ Meat/meat alternates may substitute for the entire grains component at breakfast up to three times per week. A 1-ounce serving of the meat/meat alternates component substitutes for 1 ounce equivalent of the grains component. For more information, visit the USDA's webpage, [Serving Meat and Meat Alternates at Breakfast](#), and the "Meat/Meat Alternates Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹¹ Ounce equivalents apply effective October 1, 2021. Grains must meet the required weights (groups A-E) or volumes (groups H-I) in [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP](#), or provide the minimum creditable grains per serving. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grains Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP](#), and visit the "Ounce Equivalents" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹² Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP](#).
- ¹³ Examples of cereal grains include amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Lunch and Supper

Food components ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Milk, fluid ³ Age 1: Unflavored whole milk Ages 2 and older: Unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk	4 fl oz (½ cup)	6 fl oz (¾ cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)
Meat/meat alternates ⁴ Lean meat, poultry, or fish	1 ounce	1½ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces
Surimi ⁵	3 ounces	4.4 ounces	6 ounces	6 ounces
Tofu, soy products, tempeh, or alternate protein products (APPs) ⁶	1 ounce	1½ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces
Cheese	1 ounce	1½ ounces	2 ounces	2 ounces
Cottage cheese	¼ cup	⅜ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Egg, large	½	¾	1	1
Cooked dry beans or peas ⁷	¼ cup	⅜ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butters	2 tablespoons	3 tablespoons	4 tablespoons	4 tablespoons
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds ⁸	½ ounce = 50%	¾ ounce = 50%	1 ounce = 50%	1 ounce = 50%
Yogurt or soy yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened ⁹	4 ounces or ½ cup	6 ounces or ¾ cup	8 ounces or 1 cup	8 ounces or 1 cup
Vegetables ^{10, 11}	⅛ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
Fruits ^{11, 12, 13}	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Grains ^{14, 15, 16, 17} Whole grain-rich (WGR) or enriched bread or bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin	½ oz eq ¹⁷	½ oz eq ¹⁷	1 oz eq ¹⁷	1 oz eq ¹⁷
WGR, enriched, or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ¹⁸ , cereal grain ¹⁹ , or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
WGR, enriched, or fortified ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ¹⁸ Flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup	1 cup
Puffed	¾ cup	¾ cup	1¼ cups	1¼ cups
Granola	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup

◀ Refer to next page for important menu planning notes ▶

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Lunch and Supper

Menu planning notes for lunch and supper

- ¹ Lunch and supper must include the minimum serving of all five components. Use the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the requirements. Commercial processed foods not listed in the FBG require a CN label or PFS to document crediting information. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the CACFP](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP](#), and visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage. Foods made from scratch must have a recipe that documents the crediting information per serving. For more information, visit the "Crediting Foods Made from Scratch" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ² This age group applies only to at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters. Larger portions may be needed to meet the nutritional needs of children ages 13-18.
- ³ Milk must be unflavored whole milk for age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk for ages 2 and older. Flavored fat-free milk may be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving only unflavored milk. For more information, visit the "Milk Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ⁴ The meat/meat alternates component must be served in a main dish, or a main dish and one other food item. A serving is the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, fillers, or other ingredients. Commercial processed products require a CN label or PFS to credit. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternates in the CACFP](#) and [Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP](#), and visit the "Meat/Meat Alternates Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving only lean meats, nuts, and legumes; limiting processed meats to one serving per week; and serving only low-fat or reduced-fat natural cheese.
- ⁵ Surimi seafood is a pasteurized, ready-to-eat, restructured seafood product usually made from pollock (fish). A CN label or manufacturer's PFS is required to credit surimi differently.
- ⁶ APPs must meet the requirements in [appendix A](#) of the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226). Tofu must contain at least 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP](#) and [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the CACFP](#). A 1-ounce serving of tempeh credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component if the product's ingredients include only soybeans (or other legumes), water, tempeh culture, and for some varieties, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs. Tempeh products that contain other ingredients require a CN label or PFS to document crediting information.
- ⁷ Legumes (cooked dry beans and peas) credit as either the meat/meat alternates component or the vegetables component, but not both in the same meal. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Legumes in the CACFP](#).
- ⁸ Creditable nuts and seeds include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, and soy nuts. Nuts and seeds cannot credit for more than half of the meat/meat alternates component at lunch/supper. They must be combined with another meat/meat alternate to meet the total requirement. **Note:** Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. The USDA recommends that any nuts or seeds served to young children are in a prepared food and are ground or finely chopped. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the CACFP](#).
- ⁹ Yogurt and soy yogurt cannot contain more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (no more than 3.83 grams per ounce). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Yogurt in the CACFP](#).
- ¹⁰ The vegetables component includes fresh vegetables, frozen vegetables, canned vegetables, rehydrated dried vegetables (PFS required), and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength vegetable juice. A serving of cooked vegetables must be drained. Vegetables credit based on volume (cups), except raw leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach credit as half the volume served, e.g., 1 cup of lettuce credits as ½ cup of the vegetables component. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends that CACFP menus include at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP](#), and visit the "Vegetables Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Lunch and Supper

Menu planning notes for lunch and supper, *continued*

- ¹¹ Pasteurized full-strength juice credits as either the vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. Juice includes fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Juice in the CACFP](#) and [Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP](#). The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice.
- ¹² Vegetables can substitute for the entire fruits component at lunch and supper. If lunch or supper includes two servings of vegetables, they must be different kinds.
- ¹³ The fruits component includes fresh fruit, frozen fruit, canned fruit, dried fruit, and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength fruit juice. Serve canned fruit in juice, water, or light syrup. The creditable serving of canned fruit in 100 percent juice may include the juice but cannot include water or syrup. Fruits credit based on volume (cups), except dried fruits credit as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of raisins credits as ½ cup of the fruits component. For more information, visit the "[Fruits Component](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁴ Grain products and recipes must be made with creditable grains. Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ. For information on identifying creditable grains, refer to the CSDE's resources, [How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP](#), [Crediting Whole Grains in the CACFP](#), and [Crediting Enriched Grains in the CACFP](#), and visit the "[Grains Component](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁵ At least one serving per day must be WGR. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. WGR foods for the CACFP contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients are enriched, bran, or germ. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP](#), and visit the "[Whole Grain-rich Requirement](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁶ Grain-based desserts cannot credit. Examples include cookies, piecrusts in sweet pies, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. Sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers are not grain-based desserts. However, the CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week between all meals and snacks. For more information, visit the USDA's [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#) webpage.
- ¹⁷ Ounce equivalents apply effective October 1, 2021. Grains must meet the required weights (groups A-E) or volumes (groups H-I) in [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP](#), or provide the minimum creditable grains per serving. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grains Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP](#), and visit the "[Ounce Equivalents](#)" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁸ Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP](#).
- ¹⁹ Examples of cereal grains include amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Snack				
Serve any two of the five components ¹	Ages 1-2	Ages 3-5	Ages 6-12	Ages 13-18 ²
Milk, fluid ³ Age 1: Unflavored whole milk Ages 2 and older: Unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk	4 fl oz (½ cup)	4 fl oz (½ cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)	8 fl oz (1 cup)
Meat/meat alternates Lean meat, poultry, or fish ⁴	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Surimi ⁵	2 ounces	2 ounces	3 ounces	3 ounces
Tofu, soy products, tempeh, or alternate protein products (APPs) ⁶	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Cheese	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Cottage cheese	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Egg, large	½	½	½	½
Cooked dry beans or peas ⁷	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
Peanut butter, soy nut butter, or other nut or seed butters	1 tablespoon	1 tablespoon	2 tablespoons	2 tablespoons
Peanuts, soy nuts, tree nuts, or seeds ⁸	½ ounce	½ ounce	1 ounce	1 ounce
Yogurt or soy yogurt, plain or flavored, unsweetened or sweetened ⁹	2 ounces or ¼ cup	2 ounces or ¼ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup	4 ounces or ½ cup
Vegetables ^{10, 11}	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Fruits ^{11, 12}	½ cup	½ cup	¾ cup	¾ cup
Grains ^{13, 14, 15, 16} Whole grain-rich (WGR) or enriched bread or bread product, e.g., biscuit, roll, or muffin	½ oz eq ¹⁶	½ oz eq ¹⁶	1 oz eq ¹⁶	1 oz eq ¹⁶
WGR, enriched, or fortified cooked breakfast cereal ¹⁷ , cereal grain ¹⁸ , or pasta	¼ cup	¼ cup	½ cup	½ cup
WGR, enriched, or fortified ready-to-eat (RTE) breakfast cereal (dry, cold) ¹⁷				
Flakes or rounds	½ cup	½ cup	1 cup	1 cup
Puffed	¾ cup	¾ cup	1¼ cups	1¼ cups
Granola	⅛ cup	⅛ cup	¼ cup	¼ cup
◀ Refer to next page for important menu planning notes ▶				

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Snack

Menu planning notes for snack

- ¹ Snack must include the minimum serving of two of the five components. Only one of the two components may be a creditable beverage, such as milk or juice. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving a vegetable or fruit for at least one of the two required snack components. Use the USDA's [Food Buying Guide for Child Nutrition Programs](#) (FBG) to determine the amount of purchased food that meets the requirements. Commercial processed foods not listed in the FBG require a CN label or PFS to document crediting information. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Using Child Nutrition \(CN\) Labels in the CACFP](#), [Using Product Formulation Statements in the CACFP](#), and [Accepting Processed Product Documentation in the CACFP](#), and visit the "Crediting Commercial Processed Products" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage. Foods made from scratch must have a recipe that documents the crediting information per serving. For more information, visit the "Crediting Foods Made from Scratch" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ² This age group applies only to at-risk afterschool programs and emergency shelters. Larger portions may be needed to meet the nutritional needs of children ages 13-18.
- ³ Milk must be unflavored whole milk for age 1 and unflavored low-fat (1%) or fat-free milk for ages 2 and older. Flavored fat-free milk may be served to ages 6 and older, but the USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving only unflavored milk. For more information, visit the "Milk Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ⁴ The meat/meat alternates component must be served in a main dish, or a main dish and one other food item. A serving is the edible portion of cooked lean meat, poultry, or fish, e.g., cooked lean meat without bone, breading, binders, fillers, or other ingredients. Commercial processed products require a CN label or PFS to credit. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Commercial Meat/Meat Alternates in the CACFP](#) and [Crediting Deli Meats in the CACFP](#), and visit the "Meat/Meat Alternates Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving only lean meats, nuts, and legumes; limiting processed meats to one serving per week; and serving only low-fat or reduced-fat natural cheese.
- ⁵ Surimi seafood is a pasteurized, ready-to-eat, restructured seafood product usually made from pollock (fish). A CN label or manufacturer's PFS is required to credit surimi differently.
- ⁶ APPs must meet the requirements in [appendix A](#) of the CACFP regulations (7 CFR 226). Tofu must contain at least 5 grams of protein in 2.2 ounces (weight) or ¼ cup (volume). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Requirements for Alternate Protein Products in the CACFP](#) and [Crediting Tofu and Tofu Products in the CACFP](#). A 1-ounce serving of tempeh credits as 1 ounce of the meat/meat alternates component if the product's ingredients include only soybeans (or other legumes), water, tempeh culture, and for some varieties, vinegar, seasonings, and herbs. Tempeh products that contain other ingredients require a CN label or PFS to document crediting information.
- ⁷ Legumes (cooked dry beans and peas) credit as either the meat/meat alternates component or the vegetables component, but not both in the same meal. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Legumes in the CACFP](#).
- ⁸ Creditable nuts and seeds include almonds, Brazil nuts, cashews, filberts, macadamia nuts, peanuts, pecans, walnuts, pine nuts, pistachios, and soy nuts. **Note:** Children younger than 4 are at the highest risk of choking. The USDA recommends that any nuts or seeds served to young children are in a prepared food and are ground or finely chopped. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Nuts and Seeds in the CACFP](#).
- ⁹ Yogurt and soy yogurt cannot contain more than 23 grams of total sugars per 6 ounces (no more than 3.83 grams per ounce). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Yogurt in the CACFP](#).
- ¹⁰ The vegetables component includes fresh vegetables, frozen vegetables, canned vegetables, rehydrated dried vegetables (PFS required), and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength vegetable juice. A serving of cooked vegetables must be drained. Vegetables credit based on volume (cups), except raw leafy greens such as lettuce and spinach credit as half the volume served, e.g., 1 cup of lettuce credits as ½ cup of the vegetables component. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends that CACFP menus include at least one serving per week of dark green vegetables, red and orange vegetables, beans and peas (legumes), starchy vegetables, and other vegetables. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Vegetable Subgroups in the CACFP](#), and visit the "Vegetables Component" section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children

Snack

Menu planning notes for snack, *continued*

- ¹¹ Pasteurized full-strength juice credits as either the vegetables component or fruits component at only one meal or snack per day. Juice includes fruit and vegetable juice, frozen pops made from 100 percent juice, pureed fruits and vegetables in smoothies, and juice from canned fruit in 100 percent juice. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resources, [Crediting Juice in the CACFP](#) and [Crediting Smoothies in the CACFP](#). The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends serving whole fruits (fresh, frozen, canned, and dried) more often than juice.
- ¹² The fruits component includes fresh fruit, frozen fruit, canned fruit, dried fruit, and pasteurized 100 percent full-strength fruit juice. Serve canned fruit in juice, water, or light syrup. The creditable serving of canned fruit in 100 percent juice may include the juice but cannot include water or syrup. Fruits credit based on volume (cups), except dried fruits credit as twice the volume served, e.g., ¼ cup of raisins credits as ½ cup of the fruits component. For more information, visit the “[Fruits Component](#)” section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹³ Grain products and recipes must be made with creditable grains. Creditable grains include whole grains, enriched grains, bran, and germ. For information on identifying creditable grains, refer to the CSDE's resources, [How to Identify Creditable Grains in the CACFP](#), [Crediting Whole Grains in the CACFP](#), and [Crediting Enriched Grains in the CACFP](#), and visit the “[Grains Component](#)” section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁴ At least one serving per day must be WGR. The USDA's [CACFP Best Practices](#) recommends at least two servings of WGR grains per day. WGR foods for the CACFP contain at least 50 percent whole grains and the remaining grain ingredients are enriched, bran, or germ. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Meeting the Whole Grain-rich Requirement for the CACFP](#), and visit the “[Whole Grain-rich Requirement](#)” section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁵ Grain-based desserts cannot credit. Examples include cookies, piecrusts in sweet pies, doughnuts, cereal bars, granola bars, sweet rolls, pastries, toaster pastries, cake, and brownies. Sweet crackers such as graham crackers and animal crackers are not grain-based desserts. However, the CSDE recommends not serving sweet crackers more than twice per week between all meals and snacks. For more information, visit the USDA's [Grain-based Desserts in the CACFP](#) webpage.
- ¹⁶ Ounce equivalents apply effective October 1, 2021. Grains must meet the required weights (groups A-E) or volumes (groups H-I) in [Grain Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP](#), or provide the minimum creditable grains per serving. For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Calculation Methods for Grains Ounce Equivalents for the CACFP](#), and visit the “[Ounce Equivalents](#)” section of the CSDE's [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpage.
- ¹⁷ Breakfast cereals cannot contain more than 6 grams of sugars per dry ounce (no more than 21.2 grams of sucrose and other sugars per 100 grams of dry cereal). For more information, refer to the CSDE's resource, [Crediting Breakfast Cereals in the CACFP](#).
- ¹⁸ Examples of cereal grains include amaranth, barley, buckwheat, cornmeal, corn grits, kasha, millet, oats, quinoa, wheat berries, and rolled wheat.

CACFP Meal Patterns for Children



For more information, refer to the CSDE's guide, [Meal Pattern Requirements for CACFP Child Care Programs](#), and visit the CSDE's [Meal Patterns for CACFP Child Care Programs](#) and [Crediting Foods in CACFP Child Care Programs](#) webpages, or contact the [CACFP staff](#) in the CSDE, Bureau of Health/Nutrition, Family Services and Adult Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 504, Hartford, CT 06103-1841.

This document is available at https://portal.ct.gov/-/media/SDE/Nutrition/CACFP/MealPattern/CACFP_meal_pattern.pdf.

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- (1) mail: U.S. Department of Agriculture
Office of the Assistant Secretary for Civil Rights
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, D.C. 20250-9410;
- (2) fax: (202) 690-7442; or
- (3) email: program.intake@usda.gov.

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Inquiries regarding the Connecticut State Department of Education's nondiscrimination policies should be directed to: Levy Gillespie, Equal Employment Opportunity Director/Americans with Disabilities Coordinator (ADA), Connecticut State Department of Education, 450 Columbus Boulevard, Suite 505, Hartford, CT 06103, 860-807-2071, levy.gillespie@ct.gov.